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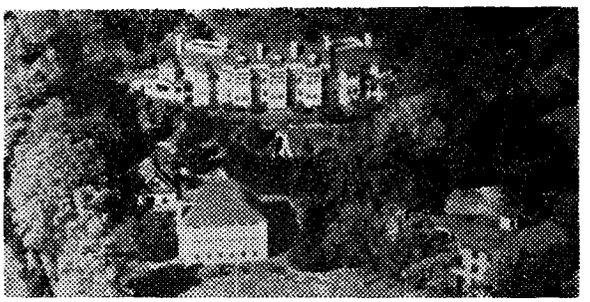

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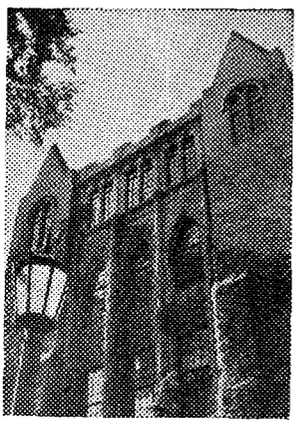

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THE
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A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

OF WORDS AND DEEDS

THE KENNEDY Administration, like all others, will be judged more by what it does than what it says. This is as true abroad as it is at home. On the international scene this Administration must show that it can cope with problems of Communist pressure on Berlin and Laos, deal with Russia in the U.N. and Red China out of the U.N., develop relations with the new nations of Africa and maintain and improve relations with the countries of Latin America. At home the Administration faces the acknowledged problems of civil rights and desegregation, of Federal aid to education and medical care for the aged, of minimum wage laws and unemployment benefits, of space research and an armaments policy.

The success it has in coping with these and other pressing problems will be a measure of the Kennedy Administration. While all this is true, while performance is more important than aspiration and deeds than words, no country today can overlook the impression that is created by words and promises. The present Administration, for example, is still too new to have a list of impressive accomplishments. And yet it has created an impressive air that has already won the favorable attention of many who were previously critical or highly skeptical. It gives the impression of firmness without belligerence, of realism free from cynicism, of determination without stubbornness, of flexibility without weakness.

Much of this effect is undoubtedly due to pledges and promises—pledges and promises that are not yet translated into action. But because so much is now expected—and conversely, because so many are ready to seize upon the first major mishaps—statements from the official family are more important than ever. Within this context, therefore, the attention given to one minor mishap, Edward R. Murrow's attempt to restrict the documentary "Harvest of Shame" is understandable.

THE DOCUMENTARY, a study of the deplorable working conditions of the migratory worker, was narrated by Edward R. Murrow when he was employed by C.B.S. When he was being questioned by Congress, preparatory to his confirmation as director of the U.S. Information Agency, Mr. Murrow was required to defend the honesty and authenticity of the film. At that time he said: "We cannot conceal our difficulties or our controversies even if we would. . . . If we don't report them responsibly and accurately somebody else will."

One of his first acts after he was sworn in, however, was to attempt to restrict the showing of the film, which he learned had been accepted by the British Broadcasting Company. B.B.C. responded to a call from Mr. Murrow by saying that it was impossible to cancel the showing of "Harvest of Shame," and that it could not comply with his request to withdraw it.

Mr. Murrow's explanation for his action was that the film was "solely for domestic presentation" and that he wished to forestall the probability that it might, because of his position, be regarded as official policy. Nevertheless he later said that his attempt to intervene had been both "foolish and futile," a judgment with which one can only concur.

This is only one incident and it may be unfair to dwell on it, especially since Mr. Murrow has properly judged the action himself. It would be foolish, however, to believe that this incident cannot be used to damage the U.S.I.A. and, consequently, the image of the United States. The foreign press has already made much of the whole affair.

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In spite of this incident, and a few of lesser importance, the voice of the United States is undeniably stronger and firmer than it was some months ago. Both from the nation's capital and from the U.N. it sounds with greater clarity and purpose. In part this results from changes in policy, but in part from changes in attitude and tone.

The conclusions to be drawn from such discrete observations are not profound. But they are important and do not deserve to be readily dismissed or disputed as they all too frequently are. For we can rightfully conclude that the idea of America that we project is part of our strength, or weakness. The substance of policy that is enunciated is more important than the manner, but the manner *is* important. A too idealistic view of what any program will accomplish is undoubtedly naive. But a too "realistic" view will prevent us from judging properly the possible outcome of these programs that depend, in part, on winning the confidence of other peoples.

CRISIS IN LAOS

THE DANGER of an armed East-West clash in Laos seems at this writing to be receding. The coolness with which President Kennedy has met the Communist threats, the solidarity of the Western allies and the calm determination shown by the members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization have apparently impressed the U.S.S.R. as being quite different things from brinkmanship and bluff.

What the West displayed in this crisis was a reasoned and deliberate acceptance of the possibility that force might be demanded, and a clear, if reluctant, determination not to flinch from this possibility. At the same time, the Soviets were given to understand that the West's determination not to be frightened did not signify intransigence or bellicosity. Even as he expressed the sober decision of his Administration to face up to the question of open conflict in Laos, President Kennedy made clear the U.S. desire only for a neutral and independent Laos and for a political, mediated solution to the problems there.

If a showdown in Laos is averted, as now seems possible, Mr. Kennedy will have weathered his first serious foreign policy storm since taking office. For the situation in Laos was, and is, undeniably dangerous and difficult. As the President himself has intimated, it is easier to point out what was wrong with our past policy than to decide how to handle the present problem.

The harsh fact is that the U.S. had committed itself deeply to the maintenance of an "anti-Communist bastion" in the form of a Laotian government which was not really stable and which toward the end was unable even to keep itself in power without outside help, much less exert any significant influence on the course of events elsewhere in Indochina. But if pouring funds and equipment into the hands of a shaky Laotian regime appeared unlikely to further Western objectives in that area—that is, the containment of Communist aggression—it was equally true that for us to withdraw from Laos under Communist pressure would have serious consequences in our relations with the U.S.S.R. and China not only in the East but everywhere in the world.

For the crisis in Laos was, and is, a Communist test of Western resoluteness, and particularly a test of the new President of the United States. To have failed this test would have been to invite the Communists to apply similar and worse pressures whenever and wherever they could—in Africa, in Berlin, in the disarmament negotiations.

With almost no room to maneuver, President Kennedy has seemingly been able to accomplish both of his almost contradictory objectives—first, to make clear to our allies and to the Soviets that U.S. policy on Indochina was reasonable and prudent, to avoid any irreversible ultimatums and the risk of all-out war; and, second, to serve notice that the U.S., as leader of the West, was prepared to meet the responsibilities of its position, would refuse to be intimidated by threats, would if necessary meet force with force.

However the Laotian situation goes, it is possible to find reassurance already in the combined firmness and restraint with which Mr. Kennedy has met its dangers. The response of his Administration to this crisis augurs well for the future conduct of our Far Eastern policy, which has not in the past been distinguished for its rationality and realism, and even of our overseas policy as a whole.

BUDGET DEFICITS

IS IT PREFERABLE to be over-optimistic or realistically pessimistic about the national budget? Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Kennedy represent contrasting schools of thought. The predictions of the former sought to reassure the general public and the American business community only to be forced to give way before economic actualities. For one thing, refusal to recognize that the country was in a recession led President Eisenhower into "assuming a much rosier economy" and bigger tax receipts than the situation warranted.

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President Kennedy's approach to the budget is not without its own optimistic elements. It is predicated on his conviction that the "vigorous and sustained growth of the economy" which the Administration is working for "will make possible a balance in the Federal budget." That is quite possible if his recovery program works, but how long will it take? In the meantime emphasis has to be less on balance and more on unbalancing, urgent civilian and military expenditures. There is virtue in everyone's facing up to that.

FOR THE MENTALLY ILL

BOOKS LIKE *The Snake Pit* and sensational articles in lavish women's magazines from time to time have brought out the appalling plight of the inmates of most of the nation's mental hospitals. Invariably these examples and case studies have proved most startling. The instances cited indicate tragic neglect; the only hope—and it was a forlorn one—was that these accounts of inhuman treatment and its sorry results did not represent a general pattern.

Any such hope has now been obliterated by the National Institute of Mental Health, reporting the findings of its extensive study authorized by Congress almost six years ago. The situation is far more shocking than any journalistic exposé of conditions at specific mental institutions could make it. Eight out of ten hospitalized mental patients reside in state institutions the country over, and eighty per cent of these institutions still provide only custodial, even punitive, care; they fail to provide the therapeutic treatment which present-day scientific knowledge would make possible. Whereas care of a patient in a general community hospital now costs $31.16 per day (and the cost in TB and Veterans Administration hospitals is $12), at state mental hospitals the cost per patient comes to only $4.44.

Even more revealing, perhaps, than such statistics, and the evidence of overcrowding and widespread use of unfit personnel, is the sweeping character of the Commission's positive recommendations. It would supplant the present system of large state hospitals for mental patients altogether; immediately institute intensive remedial treatment for the acutely mentally ill; inform the public on the nature and causes of mental illness, the low incidence of patients prone to violence, and the good prospects for mental patients' recovery and return to the community—if they receive appropriate treatment. The Commission favors revising state laws so that voluntary application for treatment becomes the norm and court commitment to such institutions the exception.

In order to make all these changes, secure competent personnel and provide for the basic research that is so essential at present, the nation's expenditures for mental health will have to double in five years and triple in ten. Most of this increase will have to be supplied by federal funds with state expenditures of a billion a year remaining constant and local funds gradually rising.

There is no further excuse on the score of ignorance. The plight of more than a half million of our fellow-citizens is involved and the remedy has been long in coming; the reasons for such change could hardly be more compelling. Instead of rejecting victims of mental illness and isolating them from the community, society now knows the means of preparing a large proportion of them to return to normal, useful civilian life. The nation and its lawmakers have sufficient evidence; the time has come to act.

MINIMUM WAGE DEFEAT

PRESIDENT KENNEDY has received his first setback from Congress in the rejection by the House of his minimum-wage proposals. His bill, though modest to begin with, met bitter opposition from the conservative coalition in Congress, and Mr. Kennedy cut back his requests to an almost paltry level.

The compromise measure too was resisted by the Republican-Southern Democratic alliance, and the showdown vote went against the President 186 to 185. The bill that the House finally did pass was the conservatives' own (needless to say, even skimpier) version of the legislation needed.

What this setback means is open to considerable question. Some say that it demonstrates the futility of compromise and the need for direct Presidential assault on the conservatives of both parties; some say that it shows that Mr. Kennedy cannot control even his own party members in Congress and that his legislative program is now doomed to defeat; some maintain that one battle is not the war and that the President will be able to short-circuit the Congress by appealing to the people.

Everyone must agree, however, on two things at least. First, the present session of Congress will inevitably be a stormy one, especially when the really controversial questions like medical care and aid to education are introduced. Second, whatever struggling takes place at the session, one of the fiercest strugglers of them all will be the President himself.

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SCHOOLS AND THE PARENT

PERHAPS because Catholic-Protestant-Jewish relations have improved so much in recent years, it is easy to forget how little we really know about each other. Then an issue like federal aid to education comes up, and we learn the lesson all over again.

I spent almost twenty years as a student in Catholic schools, from first grade through graduate school, and I have since taught in a couple of Catholic universities. In view of my own background, then, I suppose I tend to take Catholic education for granted. Or at least I would if I did not constantly run into people who certainly do not.

In the course of the current debate on the school question, for example, I have heard sober and educated men talk about Catholic education in terms that suggested they were discussing the indoctrination efforts of some exotic sect, carried on for reasons no one else could quite fathom. And the general idea behind their discussion, of course, was that Catholic schools are not really educational institutions at all, and therefore that any question of aid for them should not even be considered.

For anyone with some understanding of the place of the Church in Western culture, this view of Catholic education is not easy to take. After all, the notion that the school which provides a place for religion is an oddity can be entertained only by ignoring history—and this not only in Europe but here in America, where the curriculum minus religious content is a comparatively recent development and where it is in fact not yet the universal rule, even in the public schools. As a result, the Catholic to whom it is suggested that only education without religion is "true" education is tempted to throw up his hands in despair.

I can understand this feeling, since my first impulse is to feel the same way. But in these matters I think it is a mistake for the Catholic response to be primarily an automatic defense of our own institutions and of our own established way of doing things. Granted, much of the opposition to Catholic proposals on the school question comes from out-and-out secularists or from those of other religions who simply want to curb the Catholic Church. Nonetheless, Catholics will be making a serious miscalculation if they imagine that all the opposition can be dismissed so easily.

We should never forget that the average non-Catholic has almost no personal knowledge of or contact with our schools. A few years ago, for example, a Protestant leader made news with a blistering attack on Catholic education. Later, however, when reporters questioned him closely, it turned out that he had never set foot inside a Catholic school. Naturally enough, the Catholic press seized on this revelation as proof that his criticism lacked validity, and I think this interpretation of the matter was fair enough—as far as it went. But we deceive ourselves if we fail to understand that such incidents reveal something about us too.

If the parochial schools remain complete mysteries to many of our neighbors, we can hardly say this is all their fault. They are rarely if ever invited to visit one, and they know little or nothing about what is taught there. Does anyone imagine that this makes explanations of the role of the religious school in American education easier?

When education is discussed, Catholics rightfully insist that the primary responsibility rests on the parent, and those of us who are Catholics know that most of the pressure for additional Catholic schools is coming from the parents themselves. Catholics are not being forced into something they do not want by their Bishops. But do our neighbors understand this? I think not, and this has considerable bearing on their attitude in the present debate.

Like it or not, I fear that for most American citizens who are not Catholics our Bishops remain distant and rather mysterious creatures. For many people they are even objects of a certain fear. It is inevitable that this fact will have consequences when questions of policy arise which concern Catholics.

When Americans who are not Catholics think of the parochial school, do they think in terms of their Catholic neighbors, whose children may be crowded into a classroom with as many as fifty or sixty other children? To me much of the current debate over federal aid indicates that they do not. Non-Catholics look at our schools, and I am afraid they see only nuns and priests and behind them the Bishops. To some extent this is unavoidable, but I think part of our problem is due to the fact that there are few places where Catholic parents are actively involved in parochial school affairs in any meaningful way.

I would not want to be misunderstood. Both Bishops and parents have a responsibility in this matter, and we are all grateful to the nuns, brothers and priests who labor in our schools. But if the schools are a partnership operation, I think it must be said that to our neighbors the Catholic parent looks like a very silent partner indeed. In a country where community participation in educational affairs is a well-established national tradition, and a good one, I do not see how continuing to ignore this fact can do anything but hurt our cause.

JAMES O'GARA.

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Schism in Education

It is the great world religions which have brought nations together in spiritual and intellectual fellowship

by CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

DURING THE last two centuries we have all been taught to think in terms of the nation-state. That has been the real working basis of community, and education has become more and more completely nationalized and has been directed to the study of national culture.

But today this social unity is losing its importance. The nation-state as we knew it in the nineteenth century is being dwarfed or swallowed up by the increasing strain of world war and the increasing pressure of gigantic economic organization.

What is to take its place? Is the culture of the future to be built on class loyalty and party ideology, as the Communists believe? Or will there be developed an all-embracing democratic world organization along the lines of U.N. or UNESCO? Neither of these meets the needs of the present situation. The former is too narrow and too exclusive, while the latter is too wide, too invertebrate and too lacking in positive spiritual content to afford a satisfactory basis for cultural community.

Yet there still remains the tradition of those great historic world societies that have molded human civilization for thousands of years and which brought the divided peoples and cultures of the ancient world into communion with one another by the influence of a common spirit, a common moral order and a common religious ideal. These are the world religions which are the largest and most universal social unities that mankind has hitherto known. They are six in number; three in the West—Christendom, Islam and Judaism; and three in the East—Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Each of them except Judaism is an international society and each has a continuous history of between a thousand and three thousand years. These are the great spiritual highways that have led mankind through history from remote antiquity down to modern times. They have also been the great educational traditions by which the nations have acquired their script, their literatures and their philosophies. To a great extent they have been separate spiritual worlds, but within their several domains each has created a common world of thought and has brought the nations together in spiritual and intellectual fellowship.

It seems impossible for modern civilization to ignore these societies, since they are the greatest cultural societies that mankind has ever known and since they have had a far deeper spiritual influence on the human mind than the secular civilization that has taken their place. For they are strong just where modern civilization is weak—as moral orders and as teachers of spiritual truth.

NEVERTHELESS modern education has neglected them and ignored their fundamental importance, so that the spiritual tradition of the modern world has become dislocated and lost. No doubt it is impossible for anyone to know all of them, since at present they are still strangers to one another and it is difficult to find a common medium of communication. But that is no reason why we should not study our own spiritual tradition, which has been the creator of our own civilization and especially of the higher spiritual values on which we are still morally dependent.

Modern civilization in spite of its immense technical achievement is morally weak and spiritually divided. Science and technology in themselves are morally neutral and do not provide any guiding spiritual principle. They are liable to be used by any *de facto* power which happens to control society, for its own ends. And thus we see at the present time how the resources of science have been used by the totalitarian state as instruments of power, and how the technological order

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Mr. Dawson, a long-time and frequent contributor to The Commonweal, is the author of *Religion and Culture*. This is an excerpt from his forthcoming book *The Crisis of Western Education*, © 1961, Sheed & Ward, Inc., N.Y.

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has been applied in the Western democratic world in the service of wealth and the satisfaction of material needs, even though these needs are purely artificially stimulated by the same economic powers which find their profit in their satisfaction.

Hence the higher intellectual and spiritual activities become increasingly alienated from society and become a potential danger to its stability. For modern society, like all societies, needs some higher spiritual principle of co-ordination to overcome the conflicts between power and morality, between reason and appetite, between technology and humanity and between self-interest and the common good.

This co-ordinating principle was supplied in the past, in all societies and civilizations, by religion, which was the ultimate guarantee of the moral order and the witness to a realm of spiritual values which transcended the world of human passions and interests. Even if we reject the traditional religions and deny the truth of any particular theological system or doctrine as the modern world has done, we have not escaped from the need of some higher principle of co-ordination if our society is to survive.

THIS IS what Comte saw so clearly in the nineteenth century. But his attempt to provide a rational scientific substitute for religion was a dismal failure, as all similar attempts have been. The fact is that the problem is insoluble by purely rational means, since it involves the principle of transcendence which is esssentially theological.

It is therefore essential that we should not allow popular anti-theological prejudice to blind us to the vital sociological and psychological functions that religion has fulfilled in world civilization. In our own case Christianity still exists as a living theological and spiritual tradition, but it has been gradually deprived of intellectual and social influence on modern culture. Yet it has something to offer of which modern technological society is in desperate need—namely, a principle of spiritual co-ordination and a principle of unity —and it is in the field of education that this need and its solution can be brought together.

But we must admit that the failure has not been entirely on the secular side. Christians have retained their belief in theological truth, in a transcendent moral order and in a spiritual community. Nevertheless their theoretical acceptance of these principles is not always accompanied by their cultural realization. Modern Christians have all been more or less influenced by the dominant secular conception of culture. Most of us are shockingly ignorant and forgetful of the wealth of our inheritance. Even the well-educated among us are much better instructed—and usually more interested—in modern secular politics and culture than in the tradition of Christian culture.

THIS IS largely the fault of our education, although underlying it there is the great schism which has divided the whole of life into two unequal parts—the common world of secular life and the restricted, specialized sphere occupied by the Church and religion.

In the past, of course, this was not so. In the Middle Ages and in Catholic countries down to the last century, religion played a large part in the common life, and there was a rich popular religious culture that found expression in art and music and in the celebration of local feasts and pilgrimages.

Yet even in the past the conscious development of lay culture was in a secular direction, and the schism already existed. It is usual to blame the Renaissance and the one-sided development of classical studies for this state of things, but these are responsible only in part. The basic cause seems rather to be found in the medieval tendency to make study a monopoly of the clergy, so that the layman had no place in the medieval university and in the organization of higher scholarship. Hence the rise of a new lay educated class brought with it an independent ideal of lay culture.

The consequent division of culture into two halves corresponded to the social division between clergy and laity. While the clergy studied the Bible and the Fathers, the laity studied the classics; while the clergy studied the history of the Church, the laity studied the history of the State, while the clergy studied the traditional Christian philosophy, the laity studied the philosophers of pagan antiquity and the new natural sciences. No doubt the division was not so sharp and schematic as this, but it did undoubtedly lead to an increasing neglect of the traditional culture as a whole by the laity. And when we remember how in the past four hundred years the sphere of lay education has been steadily widening, and that of clerical education has been narrowing, it is difficult to exaggerate the effects of this division on the secularization of modern civilization.

WHAT IS needed, therefore, is nothing less than a radical reform of Christian education: an intellectual revolution which will restore the internal unity of Christian culture. It may be impossible to bring about such a change in our life-time, for educational institutions and curricula are very resistant to change. But since the traditional humanist education is in any case being destroyed in favor of a new scientific model, Christians will have to take positive action to save what they have got, so we should be wise to work for a real restoration of Christian culture rather than merely to fight a defensive action in a purely conservative spirit.

The first essential, the one which can be secured without any drastic change of institutions or laws, is the restoration of a consciousness of the community of Christian culture as the basis of European history

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and the background of our own particular national and local traditions.

The idea of a Christian culture involves a more comprehensive and realistic conception of Christian society than we are accustomed to. We have to recover the idea of "Christian people" as a true world society of which Israel was the shadow and the antitype; no mere ecclesiastical organization but the organ of a new humanity. This conception is expressed in the early Christian idea of "The Third Race" and more superficially in the medieval idea of Christendom; it finds its classical and authoritative formulation in the Catholic liturgy, especially in that of Easter and Pentecost. On the whole, however, as a result of the narrowing of Christian culture since the Reformation by sectarianism and secularism, we have lost sight of the idea of a Christian people. Not that the sects were unconscious of its importance in principle—indeed the most extreme of them, like the Anabaptists or the Quakers, often emphasized the idea most strongly. But in fact sectarianism destroys it as effectively as secularism, so that ultimately Catholicism itself becomes in the eyes of the world nothing but an exceptionally large and exclusive sect.

It is essential above all to restore the traditional Christian conception of history: first, the doctrine of the transformation and re-creation of humanity in the Incarnation; secondly, the traditional Christian theory of the successive world ages as progressive stages of Revelation; thirdly, the ideal of the expansion of the Kingdom of God by the incorporation of the nations in the Kingdom and the enrichment of the Christian tradition by the various contributions of different national cultures and traditions; fourthly, in relation to this, the idea of a providential preparation through which all the positive elements in the pre-Christian and non-Christian world find their fulfillment in the Kingdom of God.

CATHOLIC COLLEGES

Multiplication and Division

by BOYD LITZINGER

THE CURRENT controversy over proposed federal aid to private schools may at present be producing more smoke than light, but—like similar blazes in the past—it is causing Catholics to reappraise their place in the American educational scheme. Although the issues are constitutional and moral ones, they involve the use of money. And while Catholics are arguing for their fair share of the public funds, we ought also to be evaluating our use of the wealth already available to us. In short, I suggest that Catholics in America bring to an immediate halt the horrendously wasteful abuse of their resources and opportunities.

American Catholics have been bountifully blessed by our Creator with material prosperity such as no other branch of the Church has ever been granted. Out of this abundance they have been fortunate enough to provide religious education for their people on a scale only dreamed of in the past, and even in present-day Europe. But, like other Americans, they have been wasteful in the employment of God's bounty.

At the level of higher education this wastefulness is attested to by the undisciplined proliferation and growth of Catholic colleges and universities. At latest count, there were some 260 Catholic institutions of higher learning in America, enrolling some 300,000 students. No doubt these figures are impressive, but they do not tell the whole story. They do not indicate that fully a third of these students are enrolled in fewer than twenty-five institutions, and that of the remaining institutions, far too many count their students in the hundreds, some falling even into the fewer-than-one-hundred category. These figures do not indicate that many of these institutions are located so near to one another that they must compete constantly in the attempt to attract good students. These figures do not indicate that some of these institutions are of necessity poorly staffed or seriously understaffed, nor that they lack the physical facilities necessary for the pursuit of excellence in learning.

Most important of all, these figures do not reflect the wastefulness attendant upon needless proliferation. No one will deny the need for a number of good small Catholic colleges, or the particular strengths of smallness itself in an educational institution, but a few economic facts of life need to be faced: a library of 100,000 volumes costs less and is, on the whole, more useful academically than four libraries of 25,000 vol-

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umes each; a dormitory for five hundred students is much more practical economically than five dormitories for one hundred students each; laboratory facilities for five thousand students are demonstrably less expensive and more efficient than ten laboratories for five hundred students each. And consider, for a moment, the wasteful duplication involved in administering a host of small institutions. Like their larger counterparts, small colleges need a full complement of presidents and vice-presidents, deans and registrars, admissions offices, guidance and testing centers. The point, however, is that the costs of these functionaries and functions are not proportional with the size of the institution. For example, smaller colleges are often unable to take full advantage of such modern equipment as electronic data-processing machinery which today enables our large universities and private businesses to reduce the proportionate costs of administration and record-keeping.

In our own time we are seeing the multitudinous charitable and benevolent associations giving up their independent fund-raising drives in favor of the coordinated, comparatively efficient united drives. We see similar trends in farming and manufacturing. There is much we can learn about efficiency from the Mammon of Modern Business.

IT WOULD SEEM that each new year brings into existence a handful of new colleges and universities. It would seem that nearly every bishop wants to build such an institution in his own diocese, regardless of those already established. It would seem, sometimes, that the religious orders themselves are in hot competiton in the building of new colleges.

This waste need not be. It is a thing devoutly to be wished that a moratorium be called on the building of new institutions and that a study be undertaken by all interested parties to determine the needs of the nation and the Church, to consider closing down a few colleges, combining others, and building the remainder efficiently and soundly so that they can best serve the interests of Catholic higher education. Such suggestions have in the past been made. For example, not long ago a Catholic professor in the Middle West recorded his protest against the existence of three Catholic graduate schools of law within the area of a single large city. Why could these not, he asked, overlook their different origins and combine to form one of the finest law schools in the nation, thus bringing upon themselves and the Church the prestige not now earned by the three *in toto*? Answering my inquiry as to the reaction his article had received, he was happy to report a generally favorable reception. But to my knowledge, no action has yet been taken to implement his suggestions.

Another means of combating waste might be found in adopting a policy of building around existing major institutions, both secular and private, imitating the system that exists at the University of Toronto. There, denominational colleges, St. Michael's included, are affiliated with the University of Toronto; students from all colleges can take advantage of the library facilities of a major university and can also enroll in courses taught by the best professors of the affiliated institutions, the final degree granted by the University of Toronto itself.

There is economy—but there are other merits as well—in the proposal to build first-rate undergraduate and graduate schools in affiliation with the large institutions in such cities as Boston, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. In this country, the Protestant Episcopal Church has already made a move in this direction. It has announced plans to build an undergraduate college in affiliation with the University of Chicago. Its projected cost is relatively modest—$20,000,000—in light of the readily available facilities and faculties of that University. Other denominations, no doubt, will follow suit, and it is to be hoped that the Catholic Church will not be last.

FURTHER, let us not feel impelled to build in competition with well-run and well-established state and private institutions, and let us not fear the attendance of well prepared Catholic students at these colleges and universities. Today, as in the past, a substantial majority of Catholic college students attend non-Catholic institutions; and—considering our tax structure, the costs of bulding and staffing new colleges, and the growing population of our country—we shall not live to see this situation reversed.

Nor is it necessarily good that it be reversed, even were reversal possible. As many knowledgeable Catholic educators hold—Dom Aelred Graham is an example—American Catholics must one day face an unbelieving society, and the properly prepared Catholic student of college age is well enough equipped to face it at the university level. Beyond this, as Dr. James M. O'Neill has written, we must not "surrender the whole field of public education to non-Catholic groups, and go far toward making a fact out of the already too prevalent assumption that the public system of education is a Protestant system which is being rapidly transformed into a secularist, agnostic, atheistic system." A fully realized Newman Club system (I do not refer to the insipid social groups which exist in many places) can offer a full liturgical life and university-level courses in religion and philosophy which will compare not unfavorably with similar courses now offered in some Catholic institutions.

And, if I may be permitted a personal note, I might add that in my ten years' experience as student and teacher in state universities in the South and South-

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west—surely no strongholds of Catholicism—I can attest to the good influence of Catholic students and professors at these institutions. It has been my experience, as well as that of many others with whom I have discussed the subject, that a rare bird indeed is the professor who actively dislikes Catholics, who discriminates against them, or who tries to shake their faith.

On the other hand, I am able to cite some instances of English professors who were happy to have informed Catholic students in their Chaucer and Shakespeare courses to add their special insights in class discussions. A priest-physicist friend of mine—one whose work has been recognized by grants from various foundations—assures me that he has never found any marked prejudice among his non-Catholic colleagues. He adds: "They are not concerned with my religion or my Roman collar, only with whether or not I am a competent physicist."

To follow this tack further, let us not deceive ourselves that our Catholic young men and women can always best prepare themselves intellectually at just any Catholic institution. The Catholic universities, for example, with English programs as good as Wisconsin's or Yale's, classics programs like Harvard's, medical schools like Johns Hopkins', or mathematics programs like the Cal Tech's—when they can be found at all—can be numbered upon the fingers of one hand. Let us be neither too proud nor too cautious to make legitimate use of these excellent institutions already in existence.

MY THIRD and final suggestion is that we encourage the influx of new and talented Catholic minds into the professorial ranks of Catholic and non-Catholic universities alike. Allowing myself a perhaps impractical day-dream, let me propose that there be established a National Catholic Fellowship Foundation with the sole purpose of channeling our best-qualified men and women into the ranks of university teachers. Consider what might be accomplished were such a foundation to select by strict competition the hundred outstanding Catholic college graduates each year and to finance the completion of their educations in the fields of their choice, at the best graduate schools in America, the sole condition being their intent to devote themselves to university teaching and research. Within five years we would begin to send a hundred superbly qualified Ph.D.'s a year into higher education, and within two decades the influence of such a growing intellectual elite could change for the better the face of education and could favorably alter the image of American Catholic intellectualism.

That such an ambitious program would be expensive there is no doubt. But even were it eventually to cost $500,000 a year, it would still cost less—and provide much more—than the annual athletic budgets at certain large universities today. One could hope that some large benevolent Catholic body like the Knights of Columbus, which has already proven its interest in improving Catholic higher education, might take it upon itself to underwrite the work of a foundation such as this.

If I have dwelt upon the weaknesses rather than upon the strengths of Catholic higher education, I have done so because they cry loudest for attention. The means I have suggested for strengthening the weak spots are not unique, and their implementation will be hard and painful. To adopt these or similar remedies, however, will prove less hard and painful than to ignore the ailments. Our well-intentioned errors the future will forgive. But it will not forgive ignoble indolence.

EVEN LIGHT

This even light of day,
that shapes my living room
to lucid planes of peace,
and illumines, as the world's first, this
spring with such graciousness:
this even light is He.

A relish in desire:
to see, to touch, to taste
the earth, to breathe in love,
honor bodies by delight in them
and stroke the jaguar's eyes:
the savoring is He.

Death too, that blows us all,
like dandelion down,
with one determined puff,
from sick or broken or weary flesh,
from our songs and sadness:
that seeding wind is He.

And helpless tears of priests,
who carry Jesus' might
and dying in their skins,
when they weep for anger, or for joy,
or by lonely insight:
their crying then is He.

The stallion at halter,
in his muscled splendor
now see: prescinds his fire,
submits, all meek, to the feeble man
who stays him with his word.
That champion is He.

SUZANNE GROSS.

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Built-In Segregation

by EUGENE FONTINELL

"I CONCLUDE that the defendant's conduct has violated the Constitution, denying the plaintiffs the right to the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment." The defendant here was a School Board, not in the South nor in a border state but in a Northeastern suburban community noted for its liberalism. The issue under consideration was the now famous "New Rochelle school case" and the decision was rendered on Jan. 24, 1961 by Judge Irving R. Kaufman of the United States District Court Southern District of New York.

The New Rochelle controversy centers around the rebuilding of an elementary school called, symbolically enough, Lincoln School. All sides agree that this ninety-four per cent Negro school, now located in a Negro residential area, is an educationally sub-standard building the use of which should be discontinued. The Board of Education, which throughout this dispute has never been unanimous, while expressing its unhappiness with the racial imbalance decided that rebuilding on the present site was the only solution. Its opponents have contended throughout that there were other alternatives available.

New Rochelle's 76,000 inhabitants, of whom approximately sixteen per cent are Negroes, are distributed over twelve school districts. The Lincoln District, located just south of the city's geographical center, has a school population which is ninety-four per cent Negro. When Lincoln School was built in 1898, it was predominantly, if not exclusively, white. In 1930, however, when the majority of the Negro elementary pupils in New Rochelle were attending Lin-

Mr. Fontinell is former president of the Catholic Interracial Council and now president of the Council for Unity of New Rochelle.

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coln, the Board made a decision with far-reaching implications. The Board, by gerrymandering the Lincoln District, confined the overwhelming portion of Negro pupils to this district, and as the Negro population increased the borders of the Lincoln District were adjusted to contain the Negroes. Judge Kaufman considered it "highly significant that the Board has offered no evidence to refute the testimony indicating that this gerrymandering took place." Since Judge Kaufman's decision was handed down the Board has claimed that the gerrymandering was corrected in 1934, but just how this was done or why such evidence was not introduced at the time of the trial has not been made clear.

Further evidence that past Boards have contributed to the formation of the now segregated Lincoln School is to be seen in the fact that until 1949 white children who resided in the Lincoln District were permitted to transfer to other schools. The Board has not denied that such transfers took place, for in a resolution as late as Nov. 30, 1959 they said: "There was a time when the transfer of children to schools outside the school district of their residence was permitted and this operated unfairly in the Lincoln School district from which white parents were allowed to transfer their children, resulting in a high percentage of Negro children in Lincoln School."

THE YEARS between 1949 and 1961 have been years of agitation and public controversy in New Rochelle. On the one side were a number of organizations and individuals urging that the Board do something to correct the Lincoln situation, and on the other the Board majority and its defenders insisting that everything reasonable was being done. In response to the plea of a committee representing fourteen civic groups, the Board in December of 1956 requested Mr. Theron Johnson of the New York State Department of Education to make a study of the situation. While the study was still in progress the Board included in a comprehensive school referendum a proposal to rebuild Lincoln School on the same site. Before the date for the referendum arrived, Mr. Johnson submitted a report highly critical of the Board. In the opinion of Judge Kaufman this report was at least partly responsible for the defeat of the Lincoln School proposal in the spring of 1957.

At this time the Board did follow one of Mr. Johnson's recommendations, namely, to undertake a comprehensive community study of the problem. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Dan Dodson, director of The Center for Human Relations and Community Studies at New York University, a group of distinguished educators, psychologists and sociologists inaugurated such a study.

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The Dodson report stated the issue clearly: "Specifically, if the Board of Education in the past, operating in a different social setting, encouraged or permitted the present situation to develop, does the present Board of Education have the obligation to undo any damages which may have accrued under previous decisions of its predecessors? Does the present Board have an obligation to eradicate the imbalance of races in the Lincoln School which was permitted to develop under previous Boards?"

The Dodson group offered two possible approaches which, despite the difficulties involved in each, would improve the racial balance in the New Rochelle schools. The first proposal was for the construction of a strategically placed K-3 school (Kindergarten through the third grade) which "would help to make neighborhood patterns less rigid and afford more opportunity to educate for total community life and not merely for neighborhood life." The second alternative, the one actually favored by the committee, included: first, rebuilding a larger Lincoln School on the same site; second, discontinuing the nearby elementary school (the one with fifty per cent Negro population); third, a more flexible use of the neighborhood school policy; last, extensive redistricting.

Two years after the Dodson Report, however, the Board again proposed to rebuild Lincoln School on the same site. In May 1960 the Board's plan was approved by a three to one majority, winning in every school district except one, the Lincoln School, where it lost 332 to 287.

In the Fall of 1960 the parents of eleven Negro children in the Lincoln School attempted to register them in elementary schools other than Lincoln and, when the Board refused to transfer the eleven children, the court action followed. A new storm broke out when Judge Kaufman concluded that the Board's action had violated the Constitution. He maintained that "the Board of Education of New Rochelle, prior to 1949, intentionally created Lincoln School as a racially segregated school, and has not since then acted in good faith to implement desegregation as required by the Fourteenth Amendment." The immediate issue was whether the Board should appeal the decision. Opposed to appeal were many who, while they did not necessarily share Judge Kaufman's harsh judgment on the "good faith" of the Board, nevertheless felt that to appeal would only further split the already divided community.

After a heated public session at which individuals and representatives of organizations spoke for and against appeal, the Board decided by a six to three vote to appeal Kaufman's decision. The basic argument of the Board majority, in addition to disagreeing with the Judge's conclusion, was that the issues involved were too important to be decided by one man.

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THROUGHOUT the entire controversy the Board majority has insisted that while they are not happy with the Lincoln School situation, rebuilding a school on the present site is still the best proposal that has been advanced. They contend that whatever racial imbalance exists in the public schools of New Rochelle is due to housing patterns for which they are not responsible and over which they have no control. The Board argues that the elementary schools are populated on the basis of the neighborhood school policy, a concept involving a widely accepted educational value, the violation of which would do more harm than good. Finally, the Board points out that two-thirds of the Negro children attending elementary schools in New Rochelle are in schools other than Lincoln.

The opponents of the Board's stand have not always been in agreement as to what the best solution would be but they have firmly opposed the rebuilding of Lincoln school on the present site since it would perpetuate indefinitely the *de facto* segregation of a large percentage of Negro elementary pupils. While thankful that two-thirds of the Negro elementary school pupils attend integrated schools, they maintain that this does not lessen the harmful effects of segregated education on the other one-third who attend Lincoln School.

By far the strongest and most significant statement of the opposition point of view is to be found in Judge Kaufman's decision. The Judge noted that under New York State Education Law the Board "is a corporate body, and as such bears a continuous responsibility for the operation of the New Rochelle public schools." Since, in his opinion, the Board is responsible for the existence of Lincoln School as segregated, they have a responsibility to take steps to desegregate it.

While admitting that there is admittedly no "ideal" solution to the Lincoln School problem, Judge Kaufman nevertheless insists that "inability to find a perfect answer is hardly justification for refusal to do anything." The neighborhood school policy, he contends, is valid but not sacrosanct. Adherence to it is a violation of the Constitution when it is "used as an instrument to confine Negroes within an area artificially delineated in the first instance by official acts."

The Judge was obviously not impressed that the community supported the Board three to one in the recent referendum. He maintained that the Board is charged with a public responsibility and it "cannot relieve itself of this responsibility by giving the community whatever result might gratify the impulse of the moment."

Finally, Judge Kaufman refuses to accept the Board's defense that the problem admits of no other solution than continuing Lincoln School on a *de facto* segregated

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basis. What he cannot accept is "the proposition that in this relatively small community in the North, men of good will, wisdom and ingenuity could not have devised a plan for the orderly desegregation of the Lincoln School."

FOR THE CITY of New Rochelle the Lincoln School controversy appears to be a long way from settlement. The Board is appealing Judge Kaufman's decision and this will take months. If this decision is upheld by the Circuit Court there is a possibility that it will be appealed to the Supreme Court. In the event that the decision is overruled by the Circuit Court the parents of the children who are involved will undoubtedly take the case to the highest court of the land. There is, of course, always the possibility and hope that during this long litigation the opposing parties will come to agree upon some plan which will make a final court ruling unnecessary.

Recently the Board asked Judge Kaufman to stay or suspend his order requiring it to submit to him on April 14 a plan to desegregate Lincoln School, and the attorney for the plaintiffs requested an order permitting the eleven children to enroll in schools other than Lincoln. Both requests were denied and the Judge took this occasion to express his dissatisfaction with both sides. He maintained that both groups were guilty of relitigating the case in the papers and on radio and television instead of attempting to work out an acceptable solution to an undersirable situation.

At the moment the first step would seem to lie with the Board. As long as they remain adamant their opponents will have no alternative but to press the case in the courts. If, however, the Board should decide to seek an alternate plan, their opponents will have an opportunity to show their willingness to accept a solution which might involve a compromise on both sides.

One of the immediate needs in the community of New Rochelle is to restore communication among those who have divided over the Lincoln School issue. A most unfortunate aspect of this situation is that it has divided even those who in the past have worked together in the cause of interracial justice. It is particularly important that those who are concerned with better human relations join together on those questions and tasks upon which they can agree, even while disagreeing on the proper resolution of the Lincoln School issue. To this end the Council for Unity of New Rochelle has been reactivated with a board of directors composed of individuals representing a variety of viewpoints on the Lincoln School. This organization had a good record of achievement in securing equal rights for Negroes before it split over the Lincoln question and became relatively inactive.

It should be emphasized that the significance of the Kaufman decision is not restricted to the city of New

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Rochelle. Perhaps the most important point in this decision was the Judge's contention that the community through its Board of Education must make an effort to redress somewhat its past offenses against the Negro members of the community. Whether this decision will ultimately stand as a point of law there is little doubt that it is based upon a sound moral principle. Nor should the obligation to rectify past injustices be restricted to public bodies. Administrators of Catholic schools and colleges, for example, must come to realize that it is not enough simply to state that they accept all qualified Negroes. Special efforts should be made to encourage and attract Negro students as a small reparation for discrimination practiced in the past.

Finally, there is no reason for most other communities in the North to feel superior to New Rochelle on the question of race relations. Many New Rochelleans have been embittered by the Kaufman decision because they feel it makes New Rochelle appear other than it really is. They point to such things as integrated high and junior high schools and the large Negro population as a sign that New Rochelle has had a long and well-deserved reputation for treating Negroes well. Relatively speaking, this is probably true. The irony is that it is because of New Rochelle's past leadership in this area that so many Negroes and whites were and are unwilling to settle for anything less than total integration, not only in the schools but in the community at large.

It is obvious, of course, that in the long run it will be the housing patterns which must provide the basis for a truly integrated community. This means that all communities would do well to avoid the emergence of new segregated residential areas and to begin changing already existing ones. This will become even more imperative if the courts decide that a community cannot segregate its schools indirectly by keeping its neighborhoods segregated. By not waiting for the courts to decide, however, a community will avoid a good deal of painful struggle, save itself much expense, and at the same time exercise a commendable moral leadership.

We have no right to assume that the Negro community is content with the kind of neighborhood school which has enabled us to feel legally and morally righteous, while still perpetuating substandard educational conditions and extensive segregation. We have already waited too long, but the time to attack the problems in our communities is before they reach the courts.

As for New Rochelle itself, not only can it have the satisfaction of knowing that it has perhaps saved a number of other cities from much painful struggle, but if it succeeds in marshaling its great resources of good will and dedication it may yet set a pattern for community relations in America.

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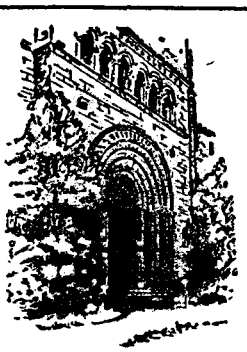

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THE SCREEN

ANGRY YOUNG BLACK MAN

WHAT WITH the angry young men still blasting away and the popularity of the French "Black Orpheus," it isn't surprising that we now have on our screens several films about the angry young Negro. The wonder is that the films and the Negroes in them aren't angrier. "A Raisin in the Sun" has its scenes of resentment and frustration that spill over into anger; but its portrait of a Negro family also includes incidents of joy and growth and, above all, dignity; and it further has the advantage of being written by a Negro who writes not as an outsider but as one who knows and understands the problems and aspirations of her race. Lorraine Hansberry wrote the emotionally charged movie script from her own successful stage play; and if I liked the original better, it is not because of changes in the script made by Miss Hansberry, but perhaps because of changes that were not made.

As a movie, "A Raisin in the Sun" is rather static and talky, relying greatly on close-ups and dialogue. Under Daniel Petrie's direction of an excellent cast, these close-ups are very expressive; and the dialogue written by Miss Hansberry is realistic and quite stirring. But almost all of the film's action takes place in the Younger family's three-room flat in Chicago; and while David Susskind and Philip Rose, who gave the film its good production, wanted the audience to feel the discomforts and indignities of five people living too close together in these cramped, sunless quarters, the effect is too confining; and even the cast, who are practically the same as in the stage production, seem to have less bounce and explosive quality than they had on the stage, at least when I saw the play.

The members of the cast are very good, however, and the story they enact, about the Youngers and their dreams for the spending of the $10,000 insurance which the widowed mother receives, is well worth the telling. Head of the family and solid as a rock is Claudia McNeil as the mother, an uneducated woman of stature, who hopes to use the money to buy a house, so they'll all have some room and sunlight, and to help her daughter become a doctor. But her son, who insists that money is the all-important thing in life, wants to buy a liquor store and support the family in style.

Sidney Poitier, one of movies' best actors, plays this ambitious, frustrated son with a vitality that is busting out all over. Also effective in a quieter way are Ruby Dee, as his wife who sees her marriage falling apart if she, her restless husband, young son and coming

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baby stay in this drab apartment, and Diana Sands, as his sister who flits from one method of self-expression to another and right now is interested in medicine and an exchange student from Nigeria, played by Ivan Dixon.

What happens when the family plans to move to an all-white neighborhood, and the son, after a series of reverses, takes on some of his mother's dignity and stature as head of the family is full of suspenseful and thoughtful drama. "A Raisin in the Sun" may not be cinematic, but producers Susskind and Rose are to be thanked for bringing us this compelling and percipient picture of Negro life.

A MOVIE about Negroes that uses real cinema technique is John Cassavetes' "Shadows." In fact, director Cassavetes and producer Maurice McEndree were so certain the camera is the thing in movie making that no script writer was called in on the deal at all. For each day's shooting, Cassavetes and his cast discussed the scenes and themes in detail, and when the cameras started rolling, the cast were on their own and had to improvise their own dialogue. As far as I know, this is the first film since the advent of talkies that uses improvisation instead of a written script; and while "Shadows" may be a landmark with some truly wonderful scenes, the experiment as a whole leaves much to be desired.

The story line, if such it may be called, is mainly concerned with three Negroes, two brothers and a sister, who live in New York City. The elder brother (Hugh Hurd) is very dark and a singer who hopes to rise above cheap honky-tonk cabarets. The younger brother (Ben Carruthers) is quite light and passes for white, palling around with a couple of angry young white fellows whose lives are as idle and purposeless as his own. And the very attractive sister (Lelia Goldoni), who is also light and passing for white, has a brief but traumatic love affair that ends when her white lover (Anthony Ray) meets her older brother and discovers she is a Negro. This plot is simple and realistic enough, but while the acting is good, some of the lines spoken by the actors are so banal they sound silly. When "Shadows" is at its best, however—in the shots of the angry young men wandering around New York, in the scenes in the family's apartment when the white man learns the truth and later when the Negroes get into a row at a party, and in the scene showing the girl adjusting to life after her unpleasant experience—the film is very good indeed. "Shadows" has interesting observations about life and its surrealistic camera deserves further attention, perhaps with modified improvisation next time, Mr. Cassavetes.

ALTHOUGH "Anna's Sin," an Italian picture dubbed into English, presents an interesting prob-

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The Commonweal Approach

The editors of The Commonweal do not accept the philosophical principles of that continental "Liberalism" which was condemned by the Church, but the magazine's approach to day-to-day issues is frequently described as "liberal." The term itself, of course, is ambiguous and clouded with historical uncertainty, meaning one thing to one man and something quite different to another, and normally we hesitate to use it ourselves. We do, however, understand why people refer to us this way and we accept the designation—although our "liberal" views on many questions strike us as more truly conservative than those advanced by most of the right-wing Catholic publications.

Be this as it may, the editors of this magazine clearly tend to be "liberal," not in the nineteenth-century European sense but in the modern American sense of the word. We are deeply committed to the idea of political democracy, and we have little patience with Catholic writers who discuss political questions as if nothing had happened between the French Revolution and the present. We value the American Constitution and oppose any interference with due process of law. We cherish our own civil liberties, and we defend those of others. We abhor anti-Semitism or racial discrimination in any form.

We are deeply concerned with genuine measures to fight Communism—moral, economic, military and psychological—and completely uninterested in "anti-Communist" crusades that make bold headlines but signify nothing. We support domestic measures we think will help in achieving that social justice described in the papal encyclicals, and we favor efforts to promote international social justice by aiding the underdeveloped nations. We think Catholics have not given enough thought to what it means to live in a pluralistic society and we consider it imperative that they repair this omission.

—From the 35th Anniversary issue

[See Trial Subscription form on page 60.]

lem—an American Negro falls in love with an Italian girl—its story becomes so melodramatic that it has no relation to reality. The Negro, an American actor (Ben E. Johnson) comes to Rome to star in "Othello." But when he selects a dramatic student (Anna Vita) to play Desdemona and the two of them become more than casually interested, her guardian (Paul Muller) gets tied in knots—not because the actor is a Negro, but because he wants to marry the girl for her money. Not satisfied with this much drama, the plot then introduces another character, a Negro who years ago committed a crime for which the actor was sent to jail. By this time the story is so involved in Iago-like villainy that none of it makes much sense; and the film has little to do with the current Negro cycle. More's the pity. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"PHILOSOPHY OR THEOLOGY"

Naperville, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: Dr. Francis E. McMahon's letter under the heading, "Philosophy or Theology?" [Feb. 17], raises some questions that are worth pursuing.

Even though "we need more theology," "don't emphasize theology at the expense of philosophy." Theology is primarily the "contemplation of the Divine Mysteries"; philosophy explores "finite reality" and "the perplexities of the temporal order."

But the philosopher "must borrow some priceless data from the theologians." If so, what happens to philosophy? This is a long-debated issue, possibly not yet resolved. Does philosophy remain philosophy; is philosophy, ethics especially, thus "subalternated" to moral theology? Or does the philosopher here become a theologian?

While theology is eminently speculative, contemplative, it is also practical. Theologians do enter the temporal order, "the slime and mud of history." Here, is or is not theological wisdom more efficacious, more practical, than philosophy?

Why is theology the "core of the curriculum" of Catholic colleges?

Do our historical circumstances possibly confuse the issue? There has been frequent and severe criticism of seminary training in philosophy and theology. Yet, the only *de jure* theologian among Catholics is a member of the clergy. (Along with this it must be admitted that some of the best Catholic philosophers are priests —and some excellent *de facto* theologians are laymen). There are increasing opportunities for laymen for advanced study in theology. But for the most part laymen

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are cut off from formal study and recognition in theology.

Should they be? That is, should a Christian, a Catholic, rest content with being a philosopher? (How can he, when a higher wisdom constantly beckons to him?) This question was posed in a seminar in which we were reflecting on the first two chapters of Etienne Gilson's *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (Doubleday, 1960). For the medieval Christians, generally speaking, to be a philosopher was to be a pagan. To be sure, a theologian could philosophize; he must do so should his opponent be a non-believer. For theology to help philosophy to say the truth "was tantamount to helping it to be philosophy."

Are such statements as this irrelevant to our own times? Given the existential order of grace and sin, should we, in the face of the riches of a higher wisdom, remain—to turn Dr. McMahon's term to another use —"poor philosophers"? DONALD O'GRADY.

"THE SCHOOL QUESTION"

Evanston, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: As a Protestant minister I liked James O'Gara's column "The School Question" [Mar. 10]. He placed emphasis on the forgotten priorities in this largely senseless debate: the "need to think in terms of improving all American education, public and private," and the "need to extend and deepen religious education." It is here that the needs of the time encounter the wisdom of the Federal Constitution.

A confusing element in this national debate, which strengthens the hand of those Protestants who still think in terms of a Protestant America, is the too-frequent tendency of Catholics to argue from the basis of their "rights" as citizens. Mr. O'Gara's argument from national needs and Constitutional purpose mutes this tone of special pleading, and in its place raises the question of what America is all about, and how it intends to reconcile its purpose with its methods of pursuing that purpose.

Anything which increases the quality and the excellence of the education of American Catholics strengthens this nation. Therefore, many Protestants are sympathetic to your arguments. In the event that the present narrow and one-sided interpretation of the principle of separation is ameliorated, they have a hope which you seem to share. It is that Catholics will bear in mind that the American need is less for the numbers in any particular educational program, than for greater excellence in those schools we now have, of whatever kind.

Thus the current debate poses not only an historic opportunity for Catholic education—it imposes an historic responsibility. (*Rev.*) WILLIAM J. COOK.

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The Anti-Novel of a Trained, Cool-Tempered Sensibility

THE CHATEAU. By William Maxwell. Knopf. $4.95.

By RICHARD GILMAN

WILLIAM Maxwell is a much better writer than many novelists with bigger reputations than his. He neither creates dubious new worlds nor blusters around the one we have, but simply exercises a trained, cool-tempered sensibility upon such experience as he has had, extending that ground somewhat by the addition of small plots of dream and minor myth—those concerned with youth, awakening, loneliness and the proper direction love should take. Tending that garden, he has never set any records at Womraths or started a hum in the centers of the higher criticism. Nor will his new novel do either of those things.

The Chateau, as a matter of fact, is likely to be even more disappointing than Maxwell's previous books to readers looking for fleshly characters who undergo things, as well as to those who wait for novels that come in the shape of chinese boxes. It is really an anti-novel; and if you understand that there is no massive esthetic theory involved and that Maxwell isn't angry or on fire or jaded, you might appreciate and enjoy the kind of anti-novel it is.

The kind it *isn't* is that of Robbe-Grillet or Nathalie Sarraute—ruthless, systematic assaults on literary language, plot, character and narration, in the interests of another sort of fiction—or that of the droll Englishmen who treat us to upside-down heroics, the flight from the Holy Grail. What Maxwell does is something much less ambitious on the one hand and less embittered on the other, though it stems from quite the same weariness with the novels that give answers, artificially jack up our morale or our comprehension, recharge our emotions or provide us with vicarious selves.

"When you explain a mystery, all you do is make room for another," Maxwell says in *The Chateau.* And in another place, "answers may clarify but they do not change anything." He does not wish to explain nor change nor even really to clarify; he doesn't even want to do what the novel, in the literary supplements, is supposed to do: impose an order upon chaos, the writer playing one or another kind of god who settles matters in one or another fashion and whose worthiness to be reverenced depends on the richness of his raw material and the finality with which he brings it to acceptable definition.

So many negatives to establish one positive. Well, the point is that we are never able to respond with freshness to any experience, much less an esthetic one, unless we are able to get out from under the load of preconceptions we carry, and I can't talk about this book without having in mind all the conventions, from the naive to the sophisticated, that surround the evaluation of literature in this country (or any country, but I am thinking of the astonishing hostility here, in the *advanced* places, the ostensibly pacesetting ones, to the new novel in France). The novel, most open of forms, is hedged in by Orville Prescott's demand for narrative and simple people on one side, and Lionel Trilling's demand for symbolism and complex people on the other.

And so, at last, to the not very revolutionary but most interestingly unconventional *Chateau.* A young American couple comes to France in the summer of 1948, spends a few weeks as paying guests at the home of a French family near Blois in the chateau country, goes to the Riviera, to Salzburg for the music festival, to Paris for five weeks, and then home. Nothing happens to them of a dramatic nature; there are no crises, no psychological or moral denouncements, their marriage is not in question, they make no discoveries about their destiny and no revaluations of their past.

More negatives. It's always harder to say what a thing is than what it isn't. But *The Chateau* does have a substance and a purpose. The substance is the fragile network of relationships that the couple establishes between themselves and the people they meet at the chateau and later see in Paris, and between themselves and Europe, which has always existed as the mythical substructure of their imaginations. And the purpose is to pursue and arrest those relationships, to present them, in mystery and ambiguity, never exerting any pressure to explain them, make them yield up secrets or deal with problems they raise.

"The swallows, in their quick summarizing trip over the rooftops prove conclusively that there is no point of turning, because turning is all there is—constant, never-ending patterns of turning." Those unchanging patterns, traced by the swallow-like flights we make toward, around, away from and in company with one another (there is a parallel here with Nathalie Sarraute's *Planetarium* where lives circle one another like stars in orbit and not too much knowledge can pass from one to the other) are the reality that underlies all formulations of our social experience; they are what *The Chateau* is about.

It is also about its author's wry questioning of the novel as a source of accurate knowledge and solutions to problems. After the low-keyed events are set down, there is a short epilogue in which Maxwell engages in a dialogue with an imaginary reader who presses him for explanations and further histories of the characters. They are given but they do not amount to much, and they might just as well be otherwise, the author says. Do you want heroes? It is far more likely that you really want a model of endurance. What is better for you is to be "reminded of how old the human race is, and of the beautiful touching sameness of most human occasions." Do you want answers? Art is concerned with questions.

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"Women"

WOMEN IN WONDERLAND. By *Dorothy Dohen.* Sheed & Ward. $4.50.

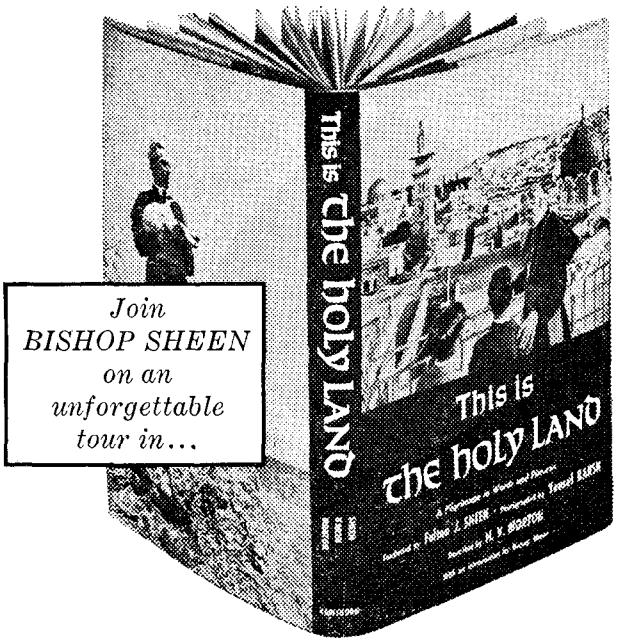
By JEAN HOLZHAUER

THE PROBLEMS of "Women" —whoever those capitalized girls may be—in relation to "The Modern World," "their Role in Society," "Their Core Function," and so on, were explored energetically, if not fruitfully, a decade ago. Some of the inexhaustible enquirers were Catholics; all of the enquirers seemed to share a basic conviction that if "Women" of the present generation deviated from the life-pattern of "Women" in the last two generations, something—a very serious and a very basic something —was amiss.

The worst of the enquirers seriously proposed questions like, "If the Blessed Virgin were alive today, would she smoke cigarettes?" The best (were there *any* best?) noted that "Women" today own corporate stock, direct profitable businesses, "compete in a man's world."

It seems to be all this hitherto unknown (at least to the enquirers) competition that upsets people. It upsets some men, and it seems to upset some women. Even today, ten years after the heyday of the Big Question, sincere and well-intentioned persons suggest that anti-Christian Forces have set females to digging ditches and operating cranes, apparently quite forgetting that "Women", even Christian Women, have filled in where needed, for centuries. The plow that broke the plains was often guided by the hand that rocks the cradle and shakes the world. The "Heart" (feminine) that is so implacably "complementary" to the "Head" (masculine) in residual American Catholic superstition, has sometimes been known to think as well as to feel, and at any rate one would expect that Freud & Company had by this time made some impact.

All this is not to say that there is no difference between "Men" and "Women," even on the highly-



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colored, comic-book level of most of the enquiries. There is, and *vive la différence!*

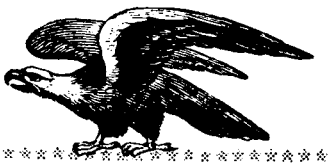
Dorothy Dohen, one of the more intelligent Catholic American women publishing today, takes all this into account in her book titled, rather unfortunately, *Women in Wonderland.* Miss Dohen's book is the product of some graduate research study on the problem, plus personal experience. The first half of her book documents some of the results of her studies, and it is an impressive documentation. She quotes Saints and Popes and suffragettes and politicians of several cultures, all to the effect that "Women" have a place in the world.

In the second half of the book, one feels that Miss Dohen's argument fails her. What happened? Did she need documentation to direct her? Not—knowing something of her background—bloody likely. Dorothy Dohen is quite capable of arguing issues on their own merits.

Still, there is a let-down in the last part of the book. It is just possible, and this may be a wrong guess, that Miss Dohen's personal experience would not fit the assignment.

The major problems of contemporary American Catholics is to dovetail their personal, day-to-day, life experience with a religious tradition that derives from other climates and cultures. The two often conflict, and no one has better dealt with the American problem of "Women" who have "lost their Core Function" than Mrs. Norma Herzfeld, in a letter to The Commonweal (July 13, 1956).

"Women", by and large, seem to get along. They marry and rear their families, huge in this American generation, or they enter convents, or they become spinsters. In all three categories, some are sick and some are more or less healthy. Wives, nuns, and bachelor girls, today, sometimes need psychiatric help, as probably they always would have, had such help been available, Sanctity is sometimes independent of sickness, sometimes dependent to some degree on it; but "Women" go on and on, certainly smoking cigarettes and



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mustering rifles and baking bread and minding children and drinking martinis and tilling plows and crossing their ankles and looking like a day in June, as required.

We may, some of us, prefer to explain "Women" by contemporary reference: the current social milieu is different and strange and difficult, etc. I tend to believe that "Women," like "Men," are certainly affected by their contemporary society, but never wholly determined by it. Are "Women" today dislocated by their environment? Not so an historian could notice: the generation half-past all bore large numbers of children and suffered the consequences; the upcoming generation will probably have small families. And suffer the consequences. Both generations represent their sex. So does the bachelor girl, perhaps committed to a professional line, but never hesitating to use her femininity where she may.

Dorothy Dohen's *Women in Wonderland* is the first well-documented American Catholic book on the subject. It should be read. And weighed.

The Gift to See Us

AS WE ARE. By Henry Brandon. Doubleday. $4.50.

By MAX COSMAN

MR. HENRY Brandon has been the Washington correspondent of the London *Sunday Times* this past decade or so. A man of responsible mind, he has come to some interesting conclusions about Americans. He finds, in general, that we have a curious liking for certain stereotypes and myths about our society. This makes us loath to admit, even in the face of more advanced social legislation than some of the European semi-socialist states have, that we are in fact a welfare state.

If we are wrong about ourselves, it is not surprising, he notes, that Europeans are in error in many a notion they have of us. For one,

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we are not so acquisitive, that is materialistic, as we once were. Certainly our proliferating concern with books, music, and the like indicates a people very responsive to the better things in life.

Neither are we so restless as we used to be. Rising economic standards have seen to that. Nor, to touch on that old matter of the melting pot, are we unfused any longer. Walt Whitman's phrase, "a nation of nations," is really obsolete. Even our tendency to see political alignments only in black or white is gone now. Witness our tolerance of noncommitted countries that refuse to sign up with us.

Because of these considerations Mr. Brandon has felt it obligatory to report us aright, or, to be more exact, to have us reported aright. *As We Are*, then, is his printed form of a series of tape-recorded interviews he had with sixteen "readily articulate" Americans on such facets of contemporary American civilization as belonged to their characteristic specialties. A seventeenth interview, this one with Peter Ustinov the Englishman, seems to have been included on the indulgent grounds that he was too good to leave out merely for the sake of uniformity, and also that being the personification of the cosmopolitan, he would add "to the stimulus and fun of the whole exercise."

Any fears, however, that this marks but another of those catch-as-catch-can sessions of vacuous bonhomie often purveyed on T.V. or what have you are groundless. Neither interlocuter nor members of the panel are unprepared. Quite the contrary. Mr. Brandon's skill in his craft and the complementary pertinence of utterance elicited from those interviewed result in a book of conversation pieces immediately relevant to contemporary needs.

Dr. Margaret Mead, ethnologist and author, is the first of the interviewees. Her responses set the informative and stimulating tone of the book. Those who are sensitive to accusations that we are too conformist or too Mom-fixated will find comfort in her comments just as those who are concerned with our position on the international scene

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will meet something sobering in her opinion that "we're far more capable of informal world leadership than formal world leadership."

Mr. Brandon's vis-à-vis in music is Leonard Bernstein, fluent maestro of the Philharmonic, and, as listeners to his conducting know, mediator *par excellence* between the traditional and the modern in his field of art. His definition of American music as "hectic, lonely, and athletic" is as well taken as his dicta on the *rapprochment* now becoming more apparent than ever between the Schonberg and Stravinsky camps holding forth in the land.

Mr. Brandon's further partners in dialogue are similarly impressive. Ben Shahn speaks out against the "dehumanization" of the nonrepresentational artist; Edmund Wilson delivers himself of aperçu on writers, French, Russian, English, and American; Frank Lloyd Wright develops the thesis of "organic architecture"; Walter Reuther shows his awareness of the role of American Labor; Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr examines the Christian view of the future; Norbert Wiener shakes us up with his vision of automatization; and Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe collaborating on a topic like Sex, Theater and the Intellectual, come up with a potpourri of observations which includes the obiter dictum, "God escapes realism."

In view of the late presidential election, the most interesting sections of *As We Are* may well be those dealing with Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy. Call it argument by hindsight if you will, the respective natures of the two are revealed here beyond question. Mr. Nixon sounds hollow for all his impeccable sentiments and aspirations whereas Mr. Kennedy, administratively level, meets each problem posed with an underlying ability that has already restored to the high office he now holds the dignity and the sense of desirable action it demands.

For such and other good reasons one comes away from *As We Are* with a feeling of satisfaction. We have not been fobbed off with silly personals, nor have we been cheated by maunderings. In the

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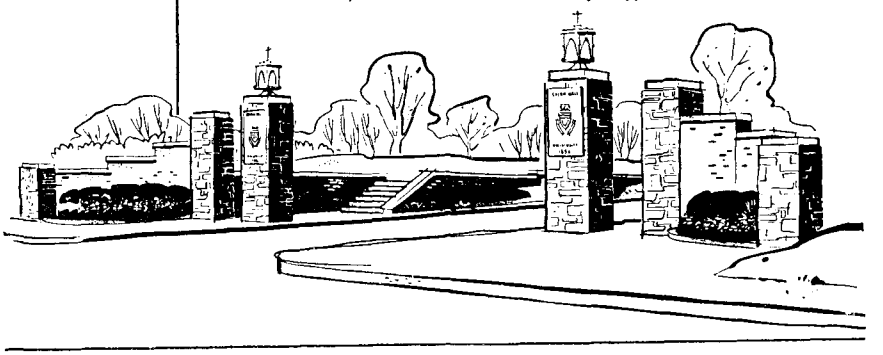

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THOMAS WOLFE AND HIS FAMILY. By Mabel Wolfe Wheaton & Legette Blythe. Doubleday. $4.95.

By JOE DEVER

THERE WERE at least two modern American writers who infected our college literary magazine set in the late thirties. Thomas Wolfe roared out on his majestic organ of contemporary American life and times; William Saroyan played the same tune on the pipes of Pan.

One of our collegiate editors published a Wolfeian novel in five installments, filled with lachrymose derivatives of great Tom's lyrical pantheism, his tankard-banging gusto, and his romantic jeremiads on true and false love. This tortured hunk of life was entitled "Love And Sammy Shafter" and described in lurid detail, for a Jesuit college publication, an Odyssey through the state of Maine at the end of which a love-starved Jewish boy finally achieved manhood with a milltown Brunhilde.

Later on, as a G.I., one of our editors slept in the same bed big Tom had slept in at poet Thomas Hornsby Ferril's manse in Denver. Mrs. Ferril, a tall, lovely, dark Helen to this day, revealed that ye olde "elephantine Whitman" from Asheville reclined in that sack with his mountainy legs two feet over the base-board. This was all very good to savor when we were one and twenty, and patient men like Tom Ferril had the generosity to tell you what was good in your writing without over-emphasizing all that was bad.

All this is recalled, as Tom Wolfe is recalled, after a reading of Legette Blythe's and the late Mabel Wolfe's reminiscences of the "Gants" as "they really were." In

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the last several years we have had quite a resurgence of Wolfeiana: Letters To His Mother, Letters To Max, a fat, informal biography by Wolfe's agent, the late Elizabeth Nowell, and now the inside family view.

Many of Mabel Wolfe's recollections and insights are trivial, many are absorbing and significant. She tells us largely what we already know; that the heart of Wolfe's art is the lusty, haunting and epic anatomy of his eccentric, native American family; that he was always the tortured, rebellious southern provincial who moved intimately and photographically amid the exotic towers of New York, Cambridge, Paris, Berlin; that his life and art continually hearkened back to Asheville where, despite his sonorous demurrers, he inevitably went "home again" for sustenance of mind, spirit and body.

There may be some question about what Keats would have gone on to achieve artistically, had he lived, but, in our baggy-eyed forties, we must now seriously wonder if this would have been true of Tom Wolfe? But for the loss of his lovely, brave spirit—and perhaps this, too, can be said of Dylan Thomas—the world of literature has not lost much with his passing. It's simply that his greatest artistic work seemed already to have been achieved. Those who differ would certainly appear to bear the burden of the argument.

Go back and re-read *Look Homeward Angel*, if you can. The young can and do; the "singing and the gold" will always be there for them. Yet the so-called young-at-heart may not want to cross the rhetorical tundras of the other huge novels in order to experience, occasionally, what is everywhere present in his first and greatest work.

Mabel Wolfe's book, as well-aided by Mr. Blythe, intrigues us delightfully with the actual portraits of the stormy "Gants." But this has already been drawn with Olympian power by the novelist. The book's account of Wolfe's tragic and kingly death, stirs deeply the admiration for the quality of his family's devotion in so nobly

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and astutely ministering to him. This sequence would seem to have permanent value for the eventual definitive biographer.

Mabel's impressive indignation regarding the alleged distortions of the Broadway adaptation of the *Angel* is a case that seems well worthy of a hearing. No reader who was ever exposed to the vividly depicted mead hall eating habits of the Wolfes would ever believe in the Tom of the theatre-piece who had to eat "the scraps that the boarders left."

But rarely is there literature written around literature. And this folksy, somewhat naive and pardonably garrulous book well serves the important function of sending the reader "home again" to Thomas Wolfe's great work.

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is sentimental to the point of reduction to pathetic fallacy: "Letterman aimed another spit at the rose bush, which seemed to be blushing with shame." It is something less than resourceful in its use of symbol. On the last page the author contrives for his major figure, a converted Scandinavian art historian, to die at the precise liturgical climax to Holy Week, and who thus "quietly crossed the bridge into his heavenly home," while the bells of Rome explode in a veritable apotheosis of metallic reverberation.

Perhaps these are untoward remarks. But there ought not to be too much critical compunction for a work that has so easily compromised itself to such a demonstrable degree. Admittedly, it is difficult for the non-linguist to know from a triple-play translation (Finnish to German to English) exactly what merits of writing *The Bells of Rome* may actually possess. Beyond style, however, the novel strains for a sincerity whose intimations we sometimes begin to feel but never fully realize. The hero moves almost too unaccountably from disbelief to conversion to priesthood to ultimate sanctity. Yet even for a convert-author, this is the hardest possible process to recreate in convincing dramatic terms.

Portions of this novel, however, manage to achieve a limited success. The descriptive milieu of primitive Christian community, with its mountain village cultus centered in an ancient Eucharistic rite, is admirably accomplished—although, strangely enough, the ritual itself raises no theological or liturgical qualms in the mind of the priest-hero, Clinnelius. Of course, too, there is the inevitable agnostic doctor—inevitable, it seems, in novels with an Italian background—whose conversion, if not imminent, will in fact be realized in an appropriately late chapter.

Finally, it may be backdoor criticism now to suggest a comparison of this book with one like, say, *The Devil's Advocate.* They are similar in dealing with the moral consequences involved in the more or less isolated Christian com-

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munity. But to carry the comparison any further, bells or no bells, can only serve to distinguish the authentic sound of reality from its diminishing echo.

ART

Max Ernst

EVERYTHING in contemporary art that is spontaneous, shocking, magical, absurd, hallucinatory or alienated, owes something to Surrealism. This fruitful movement, which grew sturdily out of the anarchy and destructiveness of Dada, is great chiefly because of its repercussions.

While Dada was basically satirical, Surrealism took over its useful elements (new plastic means, new associations of elements or forms, a liberated sensibility) and became didactic; it is by the fruits of its influence that Surrealism is best served, because in its pure, original and self-conscious form it frequently has the stiff awkward look of a theory—even when spontaneity is its name—instead of a work of art. After absurdity was substituted for stupid conventions by the Dadaists, the Surrealists plunged into a study of the psychology of the absurd and came up with a marvelous batch of trophies from the dark depths of the subconscious. Like dreams that are reported, however, these trophies suffer a change and they cannot always adapt themselves happily to the new element of a plastic world.

It is wonderful when it comes off. That can be said of almost anything, of course, but in the case of Surrealism the risk is great because (typically enough) it tries to pat its head while rubbing its stomach. It is dedicated to disciplining spontaneity, making the irrational rational, and consciously incarnating the unconscious. It is not surprising that in this process purely plastic considerations sometimes become secondary, and this danger is enhanced by the fact that Surrealism's origins are really literary and psychological.

The very strength of this movement, which is the deeply human

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poetry it evokes—it seems to some to be the chief custodian in modern times of this kind of poetry—is related to the pitfalls it can have for the artist. What Maritain somewhere calls "the illuminating image" is what they, and all artists seek, but the Surrealists sought it in a new and rather self-conscious way until it finally became part of themselves. They often had the gaucheness of the nouveaux riches until they became used to their sudden wealth.

The first retrospective exhibition in the U.S. of Max Ernst's work has just opened in New York at the Museum of Modern Art (until May 8th) and offers at one sweep the sight of an artist who "was a pioneer of Dada, a founder of Surrealism and a master of today's School of Paris" (Museum of Modern Art Press Release). In this exhibit the gamut of Surrealism can be seen to great advantage, the more so because the artist has great gifts but is not one of the giants of contemporary art. Miró or Arp would not be as useful for this purpose.

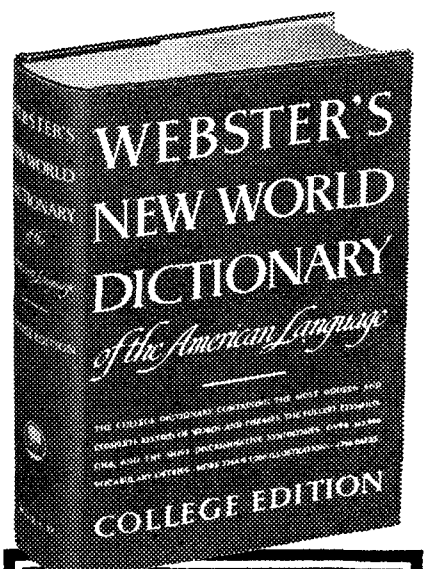
In "An Informal Life of M. E." (by himself, edited for the catalogue of the exhibit by Wm. Leiberman) Ernst says of his pre-Dada days what might perfectly be applied to the post-World War I "protest" movement: "spontaneity was de rigueur." Several years later the poet Aragon (who became along with André Bretón and Éluard one of Ernst's close Surrealist-poet-friends in Paris) said that "with a little color, a line of pencil, (Ernst) ventures to acclimate the phantom which he has precipitated into a foreign landscape." This accurately describes one of his Dada efforts *The Roaring of the Ferocious Soldier* (1919) which is a machine diagram in printer's proof, altered with pen and ink.

The effect of this "altering" is witty and pleasing—partly because of its modesty—and it is kin to all those collages and frottages (rubbings with leaded paper on variously grained materials, used to form mysterious compositions) for which he was to become famous: altering, the use of new materials and new relations between objects all hang

K

Among other things, K is a Roman numeral for 250; in *chemistry*, it is the symbol for potassium; in *mathematics*, a symbol for constant; in *meteorology*, a symbol for cumulus. In *assaying*, it stands for carat (also spelled karat).

If you look in a *modern* dictionary, you will find all this information and more, following the K entry. In assaying a *modern* dictionary you will find that *every entry* is freshly defined—with clarity and directness—for the times in which we live. If you're still plodding with a horse-and-buggy dictionary put together years ago, you'll be delightfully surprised at the many illuminating and informative things contained in a *modern* dictionary.



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together and all are related. *Two Children Are Threatened By a Nightingale,* a sort of collage (oil on wood, with painted wood construction) done in 1924 when he had moved to Paris and was in the full flower of his Surrealist commitment, is a much more complete expression and has an authentic magic—but it has a certain effrontery, a slightly gauche and self-conscious air.

It was not until the late '30's that Ernst's work, which shows characteristics of German Romanticism (see his *Forests*) as well as the rather brash mechanical tendencies to use new forms in surprising ways, took on a fresh coherence and one has glimpses into a world of fantasy that is all his own, suffused with a brilliant luminosity. *The Joy of Living* (1936)—a close-up of lush vegetation — and *Garden Airplane Trap* (1935), with its meticulously rendered fragile wings, are examples of this coherence. *The Phases of the Night* (1946) is another lovely and impressive painting, in which animal-vegetable-mineral forms exist "inevitably" in his dream landscape. In these works he has become easy with his new wealth, his whole manner has become integrated.

The group of sculptures in this exhibit—rather a side line for Ernst —seem to display that firmer control of expression that appears to be a general characteristic of contemporary sculpture: there is a less erratic success about them. My own favorites were the aptly titled *An Anxious Friend* and *Moon Mad*—wittily expressive abstracted forms. It seems to be possible that matter itself in sculpture makes the artist pull himself together more strictly for it. BETTY KAUFMAN.

REVIEWERS

Richard Gilman is a regular contributor to these pages.

Jean Holzhauer, a frequent contributor, recently won an award for her contributions to the Catholic press.

Max Cosman writes on literary and cultural matters for various magazines.

Joe Dever is a novelist, his latest work being *Three Priests*.

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